

E911 Advisory Board Meeting
February 20, 2008 Minutes

On Wednesday February 20, 2008, the first meeting of the E911 Advisory Board was called to order by Communications Coordinator, Steve Digiovanna at 8:03 PM at the Madison County Courthouse with Trent Biggers, Ron Gay, Roger Thompson, Steve Digiovanna and Janet Fortner present. Absent were Ginger Guinn and Karen Brown.

- The first item on the agenda was term limits for the board members. After a short discussion Roger Thompson made a motion to set the term at two years. The motion was seconded by Ron Gay. All voted aye and the motion carried. A short discussion ensued regarding duration of meetings. Steve Digiovanna would like to keep the meetings to two hours or less. All concurred.
- Roger Thompson apprised the board members of the E911 Telephone System installed August of 2006. He explained that the equipment had been purchased approximately 6 years prior to installation and due to the fact that the telephone system is already older and the only system left in the state, it has become difficult to find a technician that can work on it. Parts for the system are non-existing except for the old equipment we have received from Teton County. Both telephone systems are up and working with the exception of the TDD/TTY unit in Station 2. Ron Gay agreed that the expertise to work on this telephone system is just about non-existent.
- There was discussion on the inability to determine the location of wireless callers at this time. Ron Gay noted that 3 Rivers Telephone Co-op is picking up a number of new VOIP customers which produce very similar problems to wireless callers in determining their origin. Determining origin of caller will continue to be a problem until Wireless Phase 2 comes into being.
- Trent Biggers brought up a discussion on the 287 prefixes in the north part of the county going into Jefferson County 911. Steve Digiovanna advised that he has been in communication with Lisa Kelly on deciding how those calls will be handled. At this time it is a decision of the Sheriff in each respective county to decide how the calls will be handled.
- Steve Digiovanna apprised the board on the current radio system. Currently our radio equipment is an antiquated Motorola console with a remote console now functioning as the main radio. If our current Motorola radio system breaks down it will be very difficult to obtain parts (if we are able to at all) to keep the radio functioning. The radio signal goes out of the current location via UHF to the main radio, housed in a "shed" located up on the mountain 2 miles south of town. Steve has been advised by the Bridger Communication Technicians that the system sending the radio signal functions at about 50% of what it should. The structure containing the radio is in a dilapidated state and currently there is no agreement or legal permission with the property owner as to it's being there. There are some issues as well with crossing private property to access the building.
- Steve discussed the survivability of communications due to the location of communications in an un-reinforced masonry building with its vulnerability to earthquakes. Because we are located in the most active earthquake belt in the state and 4th in the nation, surviving an earthquake of a strong magnitude is of great concern. Wildfire survivability in town is also a threat as well as its vulnerability to hostage type situations. Someone could easily gain access and disable communications in its current location. Currently there is only a single dispatcher on duty. If something happens to that dispatcher whether a health problem or

attack of some sort it may be hours before it would be discovered. We do not currently have a rollover system for 911 calls to another PSAP in place. There is a need to have a back-up EOC. We have designated locations but there is no actual EOC.

- Steve touched on the need to have 911 communicators EMD certified (Emergency Medical Dispatch).
- Space allocation - Communications space allocation is about 200 sq ft-10'x14' and a large part of that taken up by the large radio console.
- In-house security - Communications is widely accessible to area where prisoners are booked. Communications could be easily accessed from the grounds outside.
- Need for redundancy - There is a need for identical dispatch stations where the equipment procedures are the same. We currently have redundancy but the equipment functions differently which can cause confusion in the event of handling an emergency.
- At this point the board took a break and went downstairs and toured the communications center and equipment locations.
- Repeater sites - Steve explained the grant and workings of Interoperable Montana. The state is divided into consortiums. We were slated to receive monies for 3 repeater sites valued between \$400,000 - \$700,000 each. One each at Sierra site in the Upper Ruby, VC Pass site on top of VC-Ennis hill, and a site on Lone Peak at Big Sky. We have been cut back to two sites, one at the Sierra site and the other at VC hill site. These repeaters are slated for 2009. This will allow for two Class A Repeater Systems with power back-up. Madison County currently does not own any repeater sites.
- Interoperability Issues - Steve asked for input for ways to get the county emergency response entities on board. The board was in agreement that continuity county wide is a priority in regards to radios, frequencies, and response. Steve stressed we need to prioritize issues for the committee to work on. It was suggested to meet with those entities, perhaps invite them one or two at time to meetings, engage local fire department personnel at the South West Fire Meeting. Roger Thompson suggested that Steve draw up list of priorities, items in the works, and provide E911 budget information and we will move forward from there. Steve will get the information and provide it at the next meeting.

Having no further business the meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM with the date and time of the next meeting to be selected at a later time.

Steve Digiovanna, Communications Co-coordinator
Madison County

Minutes prepared by:

Janet Fortner